

Washington, DC - Today, the House of Representatives passed HR 2638, the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, by a vote of 370-58. This bipartisan legislation will ensure that government services, even more critical than ever in this time of uncertainty, will continue to work for the American people. This legislation also includes millions of dollars in disaster relief to help the people of Texas's Gulf Coast who were hit so hard by Hurricane Ike last weekend, more than 10,000 of whom were received in San Antonio. It also adds an additional \$4.1 billion to care for our wounded veterans, part of the tremendous increases in veterans' health care funding over the past two years.

"Control over spending is one of the major roles assigned to Congress by the Constitution," said Congressman Charles Gonzalez (TX-20), "and we owe it all those who serve our country - the men and women in uniform or recovering under Veterans Administration care, of course, but also the civil servants who work day in and day out on behalf of all of our citizens - to ensure that we provide adequate funds so that they can do the job we have asked of them. Part of that job includes coming to the aid of areas devastated, as Galveston was, by natural disasters, and I was glad to see that aid included in this bill."

"Funding military pay raises, BRAC additions and substantive VA programs to San Antonio and elsewhere in my district has been one of my top priorities," said Congressman Ciro Rodriguez (TX-23), "because the investments in infrastructure, medical training and health care will play an important role in our community and our military for many years to come."

"American servicemen, women and their families are world-class and deserve the finest facilities, support system and healthcare possible," said Congressman Lamar Smith (TX-21). "The federal funding for Camp Bullis, Fort Sam Houston, and Lackland Air Force Base speaks volumes about the contributions of the individuals stationed there and the vital role they play in our national security. The funding also represents a significant investment in the military's presence in the San Antonio community, which has a multi-billion dollar impact on our local economy, helping to ensure that we will continue to be Military City USA for years to come."

The final version of HR 2638 legislation includes an investment of \$40.8 billion in the Veterans Health Administration, \$4.1 billion above the level allocated in 2008. The VHA estimates that they will treat more than 5.8 million patients in 2009 including more than 333,275 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan. The unprecedented levels of funding in consecutive years represents a strong commitment to American servicemen, women, and their families and clearly demonstrates that Congress will honor all of those who have served our country with the quality services and healthcare that they deserve.

Upon its conclusion in 2011, the BRAC investment is expected to fund 4,886 additional personnel and 9,000 additional students in San Antonio; BRAC's economic impact is expected to reach \$621 million for the San Antonio area upon completion.

The local investment of \$236.1 million in legislation allocates federal funds for projects across the San Antonio area at Camp Bullis, Fort Sam Houston, and Lackland Air Force Base. They

include:

- \$4.2 million for a live fire shoot house training facility at Camp Bullis
- \$47 million for Advanced Initiative Training (AIT) barracks, \$96 million for trainee barracks, and \$13 million for a medical instructional facility at Fort Sam Houston
- \$75 million for a Basic Military Training (BMT) recruit dormitory and \$900,000 for a consolidated security forces operations center at Lackland Air Force Base

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